EZRA CORNELL

JANUARY 11, 1807–DECEMBER 9, 1874

This plate was made from the last photograph of the Founder, taken in the early summer of 1874, at the request of some of the students. The original is in the possession of Miss Mary E. Cornell, Ithaca.

CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY

OF THE BIRTH OF

EZRA CORNELL

ADDRESSES AT THE CELEBRATION HELD

AT CORNELL UNIVERSITY,

APRIL 26, 1907

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ADDRESSES

PRESIDENT SCHURMAN: We had erected a tent for this celebration and had had benches made to accommodate an audience of 4,000 or 5,000 persons. The rain has driven us into this building which scarcely accommodates a third of that number. But our Founder was a man who was not the slave of circumstances, but master of himself. We should be animated on this occasion above all others by his spirit and, were he here, I think that, calmly and serenely, he would have said something like this: "It rains, let it rain." We also have a second disappointment. Illness has prevented Mr. Carnegie from coming here to deliver the address on Ezra Cornell. I know how much time Mr. Carnegie has devoted to the address and how thoroughly he has studied the sources. I share your regret that he could not have been here to deliver it in person. At the request of the committee in charge, Judge Blood will now read the address.

EZRA CORNELL

ANDREW CARNEGIE

THE subject of our address sprang from a sturdy race of Puritans who had been strict Quakers for generations.

The union of his parents was blest by eleven children, all of whom reached adult age, and were noted for temperance, industry and frugality,—excellent citizens. The father lived to the advanced age of ninety-one. The mother was a model of all that a noble woman should be, and the children had superb constitutions.

Ezra, our hero, the oldest, was born January 11th, 1807, at Westchester Landing, New York. He soon began to give notice to all concerned that he was no ordinary child.

Activity of both body and mind and a consuming thirst for knowledge distinguished him. The poor village school, supplemented by such instruction as his father could give, was his only University. When only sixteen, Ezra and his brother contracted for the clearing and planting of four acres of land, conditioned upon being permitted to attend school during the winter term. His chief passion was for mechanics, and every opportunity to pursue their study was eagerly embraced. Carpentry was learned while working upon a new factory his father was building, and that trade he followed for a time. His graduating thesis was the planning and erection of a new two-story frame dwelling for the family, with no aid but that of his younger brother and ordinary workmen. He was only seventeen but already a master-builder; his triumph was regarded by the whole country round as nothing less than wonderful. When a lad plays the architect, superintendent and workman combined at seventeen he becomes a marked youth. The eyes of his little world, destined to grow betimes, are already upon him.

Ambition stirred within Ezra Cornell, and at eighteen he set forth to establish himself upon an independent basis. After some trials he finally heard of Ithaca as a promising point because it was connected with the canal. There he went and, as the whole country knows, Ithaca became his home, and is destined as such to remain famous. Cornell and Ithaca are inseparable. With a few dollars in his pocket he walked from his father's home to Ithaca, forty miles distant—a second Dick Whittington, for Cornell also became the foremost citizen. Without a single introduction or certificate of character, the young man soon made his way. Although he began as a carpenter, he soon had charge of the cotton factory, and finally of the flouring and plaster mills. His fame as a millwright soon spread and he remained for twelve years in the same position, though for many of these he was really in charge of the business. There was no restricting of his field possible.

His employer, Col. Beebe, soon found that the man who could do many things, and all of them well, had at last come to relieve him. He was especially notable for the saving of labor through the mechanical substitutes he introduced. A new mill of much greater capacity was his sole work. A strange turn of fortune came in after life when he, the former employee of Col. Beebe in youth, became his employer in his old age, and in many ways was able to brighten the pathway of his declining years. He never forgot even the humblest of his friends of early days.

In 1831 he married a daughter of one who had been his father's pupil when he taught school in 1808, Mary Ann Wood, and never was marriage happier. Often has Cornell said that his chief blessing in life was his wife, "the best woman that ever lived." Until his marriage he had been a strict Quaker and always identified himself with that sect, being a regular attendant at the Friend's meetings; but there was no organization of that kind at Ithaca, and his wife was not a Quaker. Upon his return to DeRuyter, the society excommunicated him, intimating, however, that if he would apologize for having offended, and express regret for having done so, he would be reinstated. This he decidedly refused to do. No wonder, when we read of the guardian angel of a woman he loved, who lifted him upward with her; he felt, no doubt, as a friend of mine in somewhat similar circnmstances, and as I hope each of you young men may be so fortunate as to feel some day about his wife. He was willing to "imperil his immortal soul" for Mary Wood—one of the very best risks I should say, and to be taken at the very lowest rates of insurance, with a rebate at that.

In Cornell's intercourse with his parents and members of the sect, he was careful at all times to use their phrases, and he remained throughout his long life a disciple.

Before Cornell had more than reached his majority he was noted as a wise and public-spirited citizen. The edu-

cation of the people even then was his first care, and through his influence a local school was established at Fall Creek, which speedily became celebrated.

Nor did national affairs escape the young man's attention. He was an ardent Whig and plunged into the 1840 campaign, in which he was prominent. Later he was a delegate to the convention at Pittsburg, which organized the Republican party (1856). No doubt I saw his tall figure among the delegates, for even while a telegraph-messenger boy I was a keen free-soiler and ever on the lookout for the celebrated delegates who were then the gods of my idolatry.

Col. Beebe had failed in the panic of 1837 and the mill was converted into a woolen factory. In 1841 trade grew dull in Ithaca. Our hero was forced to look around for a new field, which soon presented itself. He came into contact with the men who were nursing that mysterious infant, the Telegraph, much troubled to know how the stranger from a strange world was to be nursed. It was an uncanny visitor, whose evident connection with occult forces staggered those in whose charge it lay. Cornell was then in his thirty-sixth year, just in his prime.

Always interested in mechanical inventions, he purchased the patent rights, for Maine and Georgia, of an improved plow, and, visiting Maine to introduce it, he made the acquaintance of Mr. F. O. J. Smith, Member of Congress and Editor of the *Maine Farmer*. Their relations became cordial, and in 1843 Cornell again visited Maine, walking the 160 miles from Ithaca to Albany in four days, from Albany by rail to Boston, thence on foot 100 miles in two and one-half days, and all this so late as 1843. Let us pause here one moment and reflect upon the lightning speed at which the Republic has developed. No parallel exists, and what of the future, when even to-day the pace is, if anything, increased? What are we coming to? Nothing less than to be the giant nation of the earth, all others being pigmies.

Cornell's account of what happened when he called upon his friend Smith is worth recording.

"I found Smith on his knees in the middle of his office floor with a piece of chalk in his hand, the mold-board of a plow lying by his side, and with various chalk-marks on the floor before him. He was earnestly engaged in trying to explain some plan or idea of his own to a plow manufacturer, who stood looking on with his good-natured face enveloped in a broad grin that denoted his skepticism in reference to Smith's plans. On my entrance, Mr. Smith arose and, grasping me cordially by the hand, said: 'Cornell, you are the very man I wanted to see. I have been trying to explain to neighbor Robertson a machine that I want made, but I cannot make him understand it,' and proceeding, he explained that he wanted 'a kind of scraper or machine for digging a ditch, that will leave the dirt deposited on each side, convenient to be used for filling the ditch by means of another machine. It is for laying out telegraph pipe underground. Congress has appropriated $30,000 to enable Professor Morse to test the practicability of his telegraph on a line between Washington and Baltimore. I have taken the contract to lay the pipe at $100 per mile, and must have some kind of a machine to enable me to do the work at any such price.'

"An examination of a specimen of the pipe to be laid, which Mr. Smith showed us, and a little reflection, convinced me that he did not want two machines, as he said, one to excavate and the other to fill the trench after the pipe was deposited. I, therefore, with my pencil sketched a rough diagram of a machine that seemed to me adapted to his necessities."

I quote the passage at length to illustrate the genius of Cornell. The invention was a success, and Smith employed the inventor not only to make the machine, but also to lay the pipe.

Here was the beginning of Cornell's connection with the new, marvellous medium of communication which was to

annihilate space and bind all nations together, making the world a neighborhood, members of one body, with all its parts in constant communication.

Two serious difficulties arose. The insulation proved imperfect, and instead of continuing the underground system, Cornell, who had been studying the subject, strongly recommended the wires being put upon poles, and this was agreed to. He now submitted plans for insulating differing from those in use, which were promptly introduced. The wire was successfully erected and the first message flashed over it, "Behold what God hath wrought." Afterwards the proceedings of the National Democratic convention were immediately flashed to Washington, a proof beyond question of its utility.

We must not fail to note here that, but for the mechanical and scientific genius of Cornell, as far as we can judge, Morse and his party would not have succeeded, and we should have had to wait until one of Cornell's stamp had been discovered. In obtaining him for the enterprise Smith saved defeat, not only from the financial, but also from the scientific, mechanical and inventive point of view. A man was needed who knew the laws of science, had the inventor's brain, and who also had, like Watt of the steam-engine, a decidedly mechanical genius.

One would have thought that, having demonstrated the fact that space could be annihilated by the mysterious but obedient messenger, the future field of its operation would be recognized at once as unlimited. Not so; very far from it. After strenuous efforts to attract capital, the owners were compelled to offer the Government the patent for one hundred thousand dollars. The offer was declined, the Postmaster General reporting that "though the invention is an agent vastly superior to any other ever devised by the genius of man, yet, in its operation, I am not satisfied that, under any rate of postage that can be adopted, its revenues can be made to cover its expenses." Mr. Cornell, on the other hand, had become thoroughly convinced that the new

medium was specially adapted to the needs of commercial business, and hence that it would prove profitable. He plunged into the work with all his resolute enthusiasm and all his means, including what he could borrow. Where others faltered he drove on, firm of heart and sure he had divined rightly. He built a short line in Boston, demonstrated its success, and occupied the summer of 1844 with the view of raising sufficient capital to build a line between Boston and New York. In this he failed. Still undaunted, he tried New York, and built a line from opposite Trinity Church up Broadway about three miles, but the novelty attracted even less attention than in Boston. The *Herald* opposed it as likely to supersede its special couriers, until the transmission of the Governor's message, two years later (1846), beat its messenger. Small sums from poor people were finally secured, but not one capitalist could be induced to invest. Short lines were built in many parts of the country, and at last men entered upon the Telegraph Age in earnest. Lines were erected in every direction, subscriptions being obtained in the towns and villages connected with them. Chicago, however, proved an exception. Not one dollar was contributed there for the first western line. Now it pays many thousands of dollars per day for its telegrams.

The chief burden fell upon Cornell, as nothing approaching the needed capital could be obtained in the towns along his great Western line. Here again he displayed in the darkest hour that sublime confidence in his own judgment that amounts to genius. He persevered, investing not only all he had made in the Eastern lines, which he had built upon profitable contracts, for he was a great manager, but obligating himself deeply beyond. In 1848 his enterprise was completed,—Buffalo was connected with Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago and Milwaukee. Then followed his line through the southern counties of this State. Later came connection with Pittsburg. Well do I remember that among my first sights upon arriving in Pittsburg

from Scotland, just entering my teens, was the erection of telegraph poles through the town.

From 1848 till 1854 there was bitter competition among the various small short lines. The great West proved the most profitable field. The people of a village there supported an office, which small towns in the East failed to do. Bankruptcy for most seemed imminent when there was formed the first "Trust," I think, in our history, the Western Union Telegraph Company, which embraced most of the smaller companies and admirably managed as it has been, now covers the whole land. At its head to-day stands General Clowry, President, my fellow ex-telegraph messenger boy, whom Cornell knew and often noticed.

Cornell was the most prominent man among the originators of consolidation. He had watched over the new invention in its infancy, supervised it during its growing youth, and conducted it to maturity; was the largest stockholder in the Western Union and one of the few millionaires then known. This was before the new species, the multimillionaire, had made its appearance. His fortune, immense in those days, exceeded two million dollars, all made out of nothing but hard work, speculation having no place in it. Cornell money was clean money, the reward of labor.

It is a remarkable fact that this man of unconquerable faith in the invention, never faltering for a moment, made more out of it than all the original owners of the patent combined from their interests in the telegraph companies. He invested all his savings in the one enterprise—put all his eggs in one basket and then watched that basket. He held on to all his stocks, while they lacked faith and were discouraged by the obstacles which only aroused Cornell and gave him the giant's strength.

Even when in want of funds for ordinary expenses he would not sell. Here our hero shines out again as a born leader of men, one among a million, who compels success, "snatching from the nettle danger the flower safety."

For all time he ranks as the "Great Pioneer Telegraph Builder."

In 1857, at the age of fifty, finding himself owner of a competence, he determined to distribute some of his surplus for the good of his fellows, and rightly feeling that his beloved Ithaca was entitled to his first benefaction, he decided upon establishing a free public library as the best gift that can be bestowed upon a community. I shall not be expected to disagree with our hero upon that point. Such was the opinion of my father, who was one of the founders of the first library in my native town, and I rejoiced when I read that this object appealed above all others to Cornell. He had to borrow the books he read in his youth, and only such as have had to do this can fully realize the necessity for and blessings of the free public library. They may be trusted to place it first of all benefactions. To Cornell is to be awarded the credit of being one of the foremost to establish on this wide continent a library free to all the people.

A proof of breadth of view, remarkable in his day, was the appointment as trustees of the library, holding title and managing all, of some of his strongest political opponents, and of the ministers of the different churches, Catholic and Protestant alike. Colossus-like, he spanned the narrow gorge of prejudice, political and theological, and set the best men of Ithaca of all parties and all sects co-operating for the public good. Quite common this now, and growing into the general rule as man develops, but in his day it needed the bold pioneer among the horde of smaller men who only follow a leader. Such men marvelled at Cornell's display of such unheard of catholicity. The idea of taxing the community for the maintenance of a library had not then developed. Such would no doubt have been considered decidedly socialistic, for why should property of those who had a library, and did not need one, or who did not want books, be assessed for the benefit of those who did want to read books? Much water has run

under the bridges since then, and I venture the prediction much more is to run in the same direction. Cornell, therefore, erected a partly rentable building in which the library was placed. The rents maintained the library. To-day communities gladly furnish sites and tax themselves for maintenance, so clearly is this seen to be a wise use of public revenues. The world does move, and moves rapidly, impatient though we often are at its seeming immovability.

In presenting the Library, the giver said:

"Ladies and Gentlemen: I have invited you to assemble this evening to witness the consummation of a long-cherished purpose—the establishment of a Public Library in the village of Ithaca, 'the use of which shall be *free* to all residents of the County of Tompkins,' an institution which I trust will be found useful in increasing the knowledge and elevating the moral and religious standard of the people. It may not be deemed improper on an occasion like this, to refer briefly to the history of the progress of the undertaking; the motives which prompted it, controlled the plans of the edifice, and fashioned the organization to which the trust and management of the property will now be committed.

"The conception of the undertaking may be traced to a settled conviction in my mind of the unwise policy, so prevalent in men of large means, of deferring until death their benevolent plans, and committing them, by their last will and testament, to the execution of unwilling heirs, indifferent executors or administrators, or selfish trustees.

"The results of the noble and wise example of Peter Cooper, as contrasted with the equally well-meaning but less successful example of Stephen Girard, led me to decide in favor of the former, and to adopt a policy which might be executed, in part at least, during my lifetime, thus giving me the opportunity of aiding in the execution of my plans, and enjoying the benefits while living which may flow from them."

Peter Cooper was the first apostle of the "Gospel of Wealth" in this country and perhaps in any country, and Cornell one of his first disciples. It is a cult which, I believe, is sure to grow. More and more are thoughtful men to regard surplus wealth only as a sacred trust to be administered during their lives for the good of their fellows instead of being hoarded.

The Ithaca Library still stands to-day, doing its appointed work, a noble monument to the founder, the best of all monuments, one with a live soul in it working for good.

The love of the farm never forsook Cornell. Consequently, in 1857, Cincinnatus-like, he returned to the plow, purchased a fine farm adjoining Ithaca, and made it a model for the surrounding country. "Forest Park" was the winner of prizes in various lines. He was elected to the Senate of New York. He became President of the County Agricultural Society and finally of the New York State Society, which made him *ex-officio* a Trustee of the New Agricultural College, then located in Seneca County, and thereby hangs a tale. Now we come upon highly interesting matter. Attention, students of Cornell. He found the College sadly inefficient and in want of funds—interesting, though not surprising. He proposed to endow it with a fund of three hundred thousand dollars, a prodigious sum those days, provided it were removed to his beloved Ithaca, and that the State endowed it with one-half the College Land Grant which Congress had granted to all the states for agricultural and mechanical colleges, probably the most beneficent and far-reaching act of this character ever passed by a legislature.

He was fortunate to meet, as the State was fortunate to have in the Senate, one whose name is indissolubly linked with his, then a bright, young professor, with us to-day, your nestor, the Hon. Andrew D. White, first President, and still prime favorite of Cornell. They became intimate and labored together as legislators for everything good;

but in his agricultural scheme Cornell was opposed vigorously by Mr. White, who insisted that the grant should not be divided, but kept whole to found a University worthy of the State. Next session Cornell became of like opinion, and increased his offer to half a million dollars, provided a new institution were established, and obtained the whole land grant. After much opposition this was accepted by the State, although Cornell was required to pay twenty-five thousand dollars to a local college for permission to give his half million. This sum, however, the State subsequently offered to refund, and Cornell asked it to be given to Cornell University, which was done.

As his ideas developed under constant conference with Mr. White, the public became more and more excited, and the introduction of the bill for a charter was the signal for war. The small sectarian colleges were up in arms and sent delegates to Albany; they also stirred up the press throughout the State. The cries of "Monopoly," "A Grab," "A Swindle," were all played upon, and it was charged that Cornell was only seeking to erect a monument to himself by planning to rob the State. He had once to sit and hear a lawyer, employed to address the Committee against the bill, intimate that he was a swindler. He whispered to Mr. White, "If I could think of any other way in which half a million dollars would do as much good to the State I should give the legislators no more trouble." Here we have a revelation of the man and his aims. Because it was the good of his State that he had solely in view, he could sit thus patiently under abuse and hear his aims misrepresented. Innocence always has a quiet breast, and the vile charges passed by him as idle wind.

The philanthropist triumphed and the bill was finally passed. The Trustees held their first meeting here September 5th, 1865. Then came another surprise. The Founder not only turned over the half million dollars promised, but also presented free of cost his model farm, which

had been selected as the site. Upon this ground we now stand. So grandly was Cornell University ushered forth to take its place among the great educational institutions of the country.

The cry was raised that he intended to establish a godless University to corrupt the youth of the State. Godless it was to each of the sects in turn, because it welcomed all other sects. Its sin not that it sought to debar any form of religion, but that "it welcomed all forms," and was friendly to all sects, but the ally of none as against any other. Equal treatment of all was its policy. Sectarian or partisan predominance in the faculty was forbidden. In another advance he had similar prejudices to encounter. Cornell proposed to welcome all studies, including technical and scientific, upon terms of perfect equality. All the existing colleges in the State were then sectarian, and little attention was paid to anything but the classics and theology. Students attempting to study other branches of knowledge, even in one or two of the large Universities of the Eastern States, which had feeble scientific and technical schools, were carefully separated from other students, and were not as a rule permitted to study in the same buildings, or to recite on the same benches or before the same professors. Nor did they receive their degrees at the same time or place, and indeed were not considered as graduates at all upon the same footing as those taking the classical or theological course. Think of that, students and graduates of Sibley, and remember that, among all its other claims upon your gratitude, Cornell University was the first in the east to proclaim all the branches of knowledge a republic, all classes of students equal.

A few words may not be amiss here, summing up what Cornell stands for.

First.—It was the first eastern University to give full liberty of choice between studies. Before its day, with two or three exceptions in the west, all University students, without reference to their aims, tastes or abilities,

were required to take mainly one simple, single, cast-iron course. Cornell completely changed this. Large liberty of choice was given, and the result was magical.

Second.—Before Cornell obtained its free charter, with the exception of the state universities of the west, all in the land were sectarian and denominational. Its charter provided that no professor or officer should be chosen with reference to his religious or political views, and that a majority of the Trustees should never be of any one religious sect. This latter provision may some day create embarrassment, when all Christian sects agree upon just what Christianity is and unite, which seems sure to come, sooner or later This, however, is unlikely to disturb our generation.

Third.—Another claim to our regard is that, until Cornell appeared, there was a great gulf fixed between the higher institutions of learning and the common school system. Instead of these being combined into one unbroken, ascending path, they were disconnected. Cornell from the very start determined to remedy this diastrous break by pushing its roots down into the school system. It established a free four-year scholarship in each Assembly District of the State open to public competitive examination, so that from the beginning there has been a body of young men and women which numbers to-day not less than six hundred, the vast majority coming from the hard-working poor, but worthy, class, enjoying free university education in any branch desired, and this not as a charity, but for proven merit. From infant school to Cornell University and through it, all free as the wind, not one cent to pay. What other land can boast of anything approaching this? What would not a scholar so developed do for such a country?

Fourth.—We come now to another feature of Cornell's unique organization, that of women students. Here again it stood in the van. Its Founder in his scheme favored their admission, but it was then thought best not to pro-

ceed. In 1872, however, a young lady won the scholarship in her district and made her appearance. She was cordially welcomed. At the opening of the session both Founder and President favored co-education, and then came Mr. Sage with his magnificent gift of the splendid Women's College which bears his honored name. There was much searching of heart among the people then about this forward step, but there is none to-day. A brilliant success highly creditable to both sexes, the product a more manly man and a more womanly woman.

Impartial students of other lands and religions have judged that the greatest of Christ's works was his share in the elevation of women. Our country is generally credited with being in advance of others in this respect. Their presence and status here in Cornell and other universities give ground for this opinion.

Having obtained her opportunity, she has revolutionized the Miltonic idea,

> "For valor he and contemplation formed,
> For sweetness she and soft attractive grace,
> He for God only, she for God in him."

We reverse that last line, or rather woman has caused its reversal. In our day, man, and notably the American man, finds in his wife the angel leading him upward, both by precept and example, to higher and holier life, refining and elevating him, making him purer and nobler. It is rather she who stands first for God only, and through her man now improves. Not a little of her power to influence for good flows from increased knowledge. She is now educated as never before, and not only more of a woman in her womanly qualities, but her mind is of ampler range, making her a wider companion, and hence more of a power. Generally speaking, a man in our day is in very large part what his wife makes him. Our hero of to-day is a case in point, and none knew this so well, and admitted it so freely, as he himself.

Another Cornell idea must not be overlooked. It was

first among Universities to admit its graduates to full and effective participation in its government. The Alumni here, both men and women, have a large representation in the Board of Trustees, with excellent results. Cornell is the University of triumphant democracy.

Men remembered after death are usually noted for one or more sentences which remain fixed in the memory of their successors. "Don't give up the ship," "Let us have peace," "Government of the people, for the people and by the people," lodge in all our minds. "I would found an institution where any person can find instruction in any study," stands as the watchword of Ezra Cornell, and must for all time attach itself to this University. It is engraven upon its seal.

Of all the triumphs of this extraordinary man, we now come, I think, to the greatest. The land scrip distributed among the states was in so many cases thrown immediately upon the market that prices fell to thirty cents per acre. Here stood Cornell with a prophet's faith in the destiny of his country, and apparently seeing more clearly than any man of his time the immediate and irresistible growth of the west.. To his vision the land grant land was simply being thrown away, thirty cents per acre having been reached, as stated above. Nearly one-fifth of the 990,000 acres had already been disposed of by the State, and this policy he could no longer stand. He promptly volunteered to take over all that remained unsold at thirty cents per acre, thus guaranteeing the State against loss, agreeing to manage it and hand over to Cornell University all the profit. At one time he had over seven hundred thousand dollars so invested, more than two-thirds of his entire fortune. The Directors of the University were alarmed and urged immediate selling. Friends remonstrated, but Cornell stood firm, the final result being that he made for this University the then enormous sum of more than five millions of dollars profit, which constitutes its chief endowment, and which would

never have been secured, but for Cornell standing alone against all others and risking a great part of his fortune. The average amount per acre realized by other states was $1.65, Cornell's average, $5.82, although the one-fifth of the whole, sold before Cornell was in position to hold for better prices, brought less than a dollar per acre. To Mr. Sage, who succeeded Mr. Cornell in the management, great credit is due for the total result. His name can never be spoken here without arousing grateful feelings in all our hearts. Business men and methods are sharply criticized in our day, not without reason, but we do well to remember that the man of affairs is essential, and that business ability ranks high in importance when working for some such purpose as Cornell and Sage were in this instance. Not for self-gain was he inspired, but for a noble public need. His gains are still at work here and this stream of benefaction flows forever. Universities more than most institutions have been favored by the gifts of business men. It dignifies the lives of Harvard, Yale, Cornell, Stanford, Hopkins, Clark, Brown, Dartmouth, Williams and others to have their wealth transformed into seats of learning. Their very names arouse the enthusiasm of thousands of our leading men who were students in the past, and of thousands of students of to-day, and hundreds of thousands yet to come will cheer them. In this memorable struggle with the land grant problem, we note the rare foresight which distinguished Cornell, the indomitable will and abiding faith in himself against all doubters, and, above all, we feel the throbbing heart which prompted him to greatly dare for the object of his love, his University. If any student of Cornell in a crisis be ever in want of example to inspire him to hold fast and fight on to the end, knowing no such word as fail, he can find no better in the pages of history than that of the Founder and the land grant campaign, fought against the earnest advice and even the remonstrances of his best friends. He stands in history here, recalling Coriolanus's proud boast, "Alone I did it."

Ex-President White judges that the most remarkable of all his traits was his foresight. He was apparently the most sanguine of men in regard to the future of his country. He had faith in her destiny which he saw was to become the mightiest and freest empire the world had ever dreamed of, a continent under one flag. Hence his belief that the telegraph would prove profitable, that his railroad projects would prosper, and that the land scrip would become valuable as population increased. All his ducks were swans. To make this transformation is an invaluable quality in any man. He knew much better than not to count his chickens until they were hatched. He counted his over and over long before a hen cackled, and was certain that every one he counted, and a few extras were sure to arrive in due season. Philosopher as he was, he knew that, even if they never were hatched at all, he had thus at least enjoyed the pleasure of the count, which was something to the good. If we do not anticipate many a splendid brood, we may seldom have the pleasure of counting at all. It is good policy to secure the count. Be king always, students, in your dreams. Have faith in your star, as Cornell had. Rejoice in coming triumphs. Count them over often in anticipation. Stand to your guns, certain of victory at the finish as he was. You cannot find a character more worthy of imitation in every respect, unselfish, courageous, truthful, generous, and reverent man as he was, and although not quite orthodox in his day, ever mindful of the great truth that "the highest worship of God is service to man."

Ezra Cornell at last saw Cornell University fairly launched, his ideas adopted and bearing good fruit. The next enterprise that attracted him was to bring Ithaca well into the railway system, and into this serious task he launched with his usual enthusiasm and incurred heavy responsibilities, again against the remonstrances of friends, who pleaded with him to take the rest he needed. His reply was that he was good for twenty years yet, like his

father, "and would make another million out of the railroads needed for the University endowment." Never was man more completely absorbed in an undertaking than he in his University. It was his first care from the day it began, and, as we see, his last care to the end. Of this we may be well assured, no University bearing the name of man ever received from its founder a tithe of the labor bestowed upon this by Cornell, who contributed not only his fortune, but consecrated himself to it, and just as his great abilities were sorely needed he was prostrated, on June 9th, 1874, by an attack of pneumonia which proved fatal. On December 9th, he breathed his last, in his sixty-seventh year.

The man who knew Cornell longest and most intimately, and co-operated with him from first to last in his great work, our friend ex-President White, ends his tribute to him in these words: "Cornell was one of the simplest, noblest, truest and most self-sacrificing men I have ever known. Not a selfish thought ever tainted his efforts. I can say of him without reserve, that during all the years I knew him he went about doing good." Where shall we find a nobler epitaph.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Faculty, Students and Alumni of Cornell, let us be grateful that there has come to us the knowledge of such a man, and resolve that this light shall not shine upon us without creating within our breasts the firm resolve to revere the memory, emulate the virtues, and follow as closely as we can the example of one who all his mature life "went about doing good"—Ezra Cornell.

[At the conclusion of the address President Schurman presented the following resolution, which was unanimously and enthusiastically adopted and at once telegraphed to Mr. Carnegie:

April 26, 1907.

Andrew Carnegie, Esq.,
2 East 91st Street,
New York City.

The Trustees, Faculties, and students of Cornell University, assembled to the number of four or five thousand in

special convocation to celebrate the centennial of the birth of Ezra Cornell, having just listened to your sympathetic and masterly oration on the Founder of our University, send you their congratulations and thanks; while at the same time they express their deep regret that you could not have been present to deliver the address in person. All hope that you may soon be restored to your usual good health and enjoy it for many years to come.

J. G. SCHURMAN,
President.]

PRESIDENT SCHURMAN: There has been no time since the University opened in 1868 when the next speaker needed an introduction to a Cornell audience. I have the honor to present the friend and fellow-worker of Ezra Cornell, the first President of the University.

EZRA CORNELL

ANDREW D. WHITE

I am asked by the Faculty of the University to represent them on this happy occasion, and to say a few words in their behalf.

And first, I know that I shall be uttering the thoughts of every one of them when I thank Mr. Carnegie for the address which he has prepared for us, which he has been unable to deliver, but which we have just heard from an honored son of the University. It is the result of careful and earnest study of our Founder's life, in the best sources available. But it is more than that,—much more. Mr. Carnegie, looking into his own heart and mind, has divined the heart and mind of our Founder. The circumstances of Andrew Carnegie's life have made him understand the forces which made Ezra Cornell what he was. The philosophy of life which one of them has adopted was that which was adopted by the other. The toil, the difficulties, the trials, the perplexities, the joy of achievement which fell to the lot of our Founder have been fully appreciated by Mr. Carnegie, and in the name of the Faculty, and, indeed, of every one present, I renew to him most hearty thanks.

It was my good fortune to know Ezra Cornell, and to know him well, and I can say that Mr. Carnegie's sketch of him and summary of his work, for its insight into motives, its lucidity in statement, its appreciation of Mr. Cornell's methods and aims, will pass into history with the honored author's biography of James Watt and his address upon Edward M. Stanton.

Were I to accentuate any of Mr. Carnegie's statements, I should, first of all, lay stress upon Mr. Cornell's great moral qualities. I should sum them up in the word *Character*;—embracing in that his steady fidelity to duty, his loyalty to truth, his helpfulness to his fellowmen, his regardlessness of self, his willingness to labor steadily, in season and out of season, through evil report and good report, for the prevalence of better standards of right and justice, and his "standing four square to all the winds that blew."

Next, as to Mr. Cornell's intellectual qualities, I should lay stress on his foresight, to my mind his most remarkable quality. This it was that led him to foresee the possibilities of the electric telegraph, to work for it in spite of all discouragements, to cling to it in spite of all remonstrances. He foresaw that this little instrument invented by Professor Morse was to be one of the great things in a new era; that it would give a means of communication which the American people would appreciate. While others considered it a mere toy, he saw in it an instrument powerful to bring in a new epoch.

It was this same foresight which, when wealth had come to him, led him to establish his public library in Ithaca. He foresaw that by opening up in this way the treasures of human thought to his fellow citizens, he would do more to uplift their whole character than by any other form of benefaction which he could make at that time.

This same foresight it was which led him to see that a university planted in the heart of this great growing commonwealth of New York, surrounded by other commonwealths, midway between the old universities of the east and the new universities of the west, would meet a great need of the country.

This it was, too, which led him, while recognizing the values of much in the old curriculum of our colleges, to aid in shaking off old shackles of scholasticism; to recognize the value of literature and art, as they are developing to-day; of science, pure and applied; of historical studies;

of studies in political science; of the great modern languages and literatures.

This foresight, also, it was which led him to insist that the University should never be permitted to fall under sectarian control. He had discerned the fact that there had been far too much selection of professors on account of their inherited creeds rather than for their real superiority in knowledge and in ability to give instruction.

This same foresight it was which led him alone, the only man in the United States at that time who appreciated the fact, to see the vast possibilities involved in locating land scrip donated by the United States rather than to sell it at a petty price.

And this foresight it was which made him throw himself into various public enterprises which, though then thought chimerical, are now seen to be in the highest sense practical.

If I were called upon in these brief remarks to accentuate another point which has been well brought out by Mr. Carnegie, it would be Mr. Cornell's *Faith*,—faith in a "Power in the universe, not ourselves, working for righteousness," and in the necessity of conforming to the will of that power.

He had faith, also, in his fellow men. The roots of this faith penetrated and permeated all his thinking. Bad as many of the exhibitions of human nature are, he believed that man is not a fallen being, but a risen and a rising being. He did not pass his time in scolding at the evil manifestations of human nature about him; he was not censorious; he was not intolerant: he simply endeavored to lay foundations for a better future.

He had faith in the future of this University. My friend Governor Woodford, here present, who sat beside him on the day when the University was opened, thirty-nine years ago, will remember his somewhat humorous reference to a gentleman who had visited the University, had found only one building—in the midst of surroundings

unkempt and apparently unpromising,—and who had loudly deprecated this fact. In his speech made on that occasion, Mr. Cornell referred to this and said to his great audience: "We have not invited you to see a University finished. We have invited you to see a University begun." Again and again he said to me: "There are those living who will see five thousand students on these university grounds." He had faith that good men and true would follow him—men who would value science, literature and art; unsectarian education; freedom of choice between studies. He believed that these men would take up his work and carry it through in accordance with the needs of generations yet unborn.

All these conclusions of his, his sincerity, his purity of motive, were, indeed, for a time denied. Mean men imputed to him mean motives. It was so hard for certain classes of men to believe that he could be devoting his fortune and such constant, earnest effort to the welfare of people who had not yet appeared on this planet. I sat at his side when a venal attorney, in the presence of the Senate and Assembly of New York, poured out upon him a torrent of ridicule and abuse; and, as I have more than once stated, I felt it a great honor that some of the venom thrown upon him was splashed upon me. I noted his way of taking all this. He was as calm, as quiet, as unmoved as if the creature who was attacking him had been paying him compliments. When, on this occasion, the charge was made that he was managing the land grant fund for selfish purposes, and that he was seeking to build up a monument for himself, he simply turned to me and said, in his dry, humorous way: "If I could think of any way in which my money would do as much good, I would not trouble these gentlemen with it:—I might give it to old Harvard, where they hanged my Quaker ancestors."

I was with him on another occasion, at the formal opening of the University, when a Governor of the State of New York, fearing that the various denominational col-

leges which had so bitterly opposed the creation of the new university might possibly cast some votes against him if he countenanced it, deliberately left us in the lurch, went to a review of the National Guard on yonder plain instead of attending a meeting of the Board of Trustees, and on the eve of the opening of the University, took the train for New York. Even at that Mr. Cornell was unmoved. He quietly said: "It is just like him. But we have Lieutenant-Governor Woodford: he will speak far better than the Governor can." And he did.

I was with him, also, when a demagogue, representing personal and political jealousies, poured forth, in the Legislature of this state, a venomous speech impugning Mr. Cornell's motives and misrepresenting his transactions,—a speech which was scattered broadcast through the press of this and other states. It was considered by his friends and by the friends of the University a great calamity: for lies travel so fast and truth follows so slowly. I shall never forget the equanimity with which he took this onslaught. His first remark to me was: "I have always expected that some such attack would come, but my only fear was that it would come after my death, when I should not be here to answer it and to show the details of all the transaction: I am glad that it has come now, while I am living, while every transaction of mine with the state can be explained and the truth based upon documentary evidence. Governor Dix is an honest man: I shall ask him to appoint an investigating committee, of which a majority shall be opposed to me in politics, and on their report I will stand or fall."

That committee was appointed. It consisted of the Vice-President of the United States, William A. Wheeler, a Republican: Horatio Seymour, formerly Governor of the State and Democratic candidate for the Presidency, and Mr. John D. Van Buren, eminent as a supporter of Democratic views in the State. The investigation was long and thorough. It resulted in complete defeat for the enemies of the University, and not merely in Mr. Cornell's exonera-

tion, but in the commendation of his views and policy, and in the carrying out of some ideas of his which, previous to that time, we had not dared to ask.

And I saw him upon his death bed, when a journalist, so called, one of the kind which disgraces our civilization, was, for political purposes, reiterating the old charges of land grabbing, land jobbing and the like, and this even after Mr. Cornell's transactions with the University had been closed, and not merely his honesty, but his high sense of honor, had been demonstrated. And yet I feel sure that he passed into eternity without one harsh thought against this or any other human being.

Another charge was brought against him. Sundry so-called religious orators attacked him as an atheist. Never was charge more unfounded. No man ever believed more deeply than he in that "Power in the universe, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." Mr. Cornell was wont to aid every form of religious effort. When he established his library, he named among its trustees every pastor in Ithaca, Catholic and Protestant. He was a member of the Society of Friends; but if in any church whatever there was any preacher who seemed to have a message for him, he went to hear it: to none of his contemporaries did he approach more closely in his reliance on an unseen Power and in his wish to do the will of that Power than to Abraham Lincoln.

I may allude to another feeling against him betrayed among certain men and in certain quarters. Poor human nature! How sadly it manifests itself at times! Here was a man who worked harder than most day laborers, who finally killed himself with hard labor, who wrought with all his might by day and traveled from field to field of labor by night, who had accumulated what was in his day considered a large fortune, in a most honorable way, who had used it always for the benefit of his fellow men. Neither in his dress nor in his mode of living did he vaunt or pamper himself. And yet, from time to time, one heard whisperings and whimperings of envy. Men who had not

his foresight in recognizing an enterprise of infinitely more value to the public at large than to any individuals, men who had not set telegraph poles, as he did, who had not walked forty miles a day, as he did, somehow, in their hearts, blamed him. What right had he to foresee the future of the telegraph? What right had he to cling to the poor stock, so long valueless, in which he had to take his pay, when they, if they had any, sold it? From considerations like these came criticisms and even hostility.

And finally, if I were to accentuate any other of his characteristics, it would be his unselfishness. His services to the community were unceasing. In locating the lands of the University, in devising new ways to make library and University more effective, in aiding legislation for public utilities, in pressing forward the railways which would put an end to the isolation of Ithaca and which would facilitate communication between the University town and the outside world, he was indefatigable. Nor did this forbid lesser outgrowths of his love for his fellow men. I have seen him when, weary and worn, on the afternoon of a hot summer day, he was taking a moment of repose, admit a poor student, and then deliberately walk down the hill into yonder town to buy the books this student needed.

I might speak of his genial side, of the dry wit and humor which at times delighted his hearers, but I prefer to speak of that which Thomas Carlyle thought greater,—his silences, his hours of brooding over the needs of his fellow men, and devising means to nobly satisfy them.

That quality of silent strength in the man was recognized by other strong men;—Agassiz, Goldwin Smith, Lowell, Froude, Curtis, who came here in those early days, felt the deep values of the man and admired his forceful thought and action.

And this occasion ought not to pass without recalling the friendship between him and one whom every Ithacan loves and respects, Francis Miles Finch. Between the two men there grew up a close and even affectionate relation; as a

great lawyer Judge Finch divined Mr. Cornell's power of thought; as a true poet, he divined the noble qualities of Mr. Cornell's heart and mind; the deep, hearty respect and friendship which existed between them honored both.

At this hundredth anniversary of Mr. Cornell's birth, his work is but just begun. The time will come when his statue will stand on this soil which he wrought with his own hands and amid these scenes he loved so well. Centuries hence, his name will be honored here, and countless generations of students will do just homage to him as one who rose above the selfishness of his time, and lived for his fellow men.

PRESIDENT SCHURMAN: The committee in charge of the celebration have desired that the old students and graduates should be represented by an undergraduate of the early years when Ezra Cornell himself was still alive. As such a representative they have selected a gentleman who is well known to the bar of New Jersey as a practitioner and to the legal profession of the country as an author. I have much pleasure in presenting to you the Hon. William H. Corbin.

EZRA CORNELL FROM THE STUDENT'S POINT OF VIEW

WILLIAM HORACE CORBIN

As seen through the eyes of the first students who came to Ithaca, Ezra Cornell was a tall, spare, strong man, a little bent, with iron-grey hair, a long pointed iron-grey beard, and giving out in appearance and action a general impression of iron.

He seemed silent, patient and grave, and to us, who could judge only by outward appearance, he seemed austere.

He wore a tall silk hat, a suit of black broadcloth, a frock coat with full skirts, and a large black satin stock over a stiff collar,—the conventional dress of a well-to-do retired country gentleman of forty years ago. Whether he was walking the streets of Ithaca, or strolling over the hillside fields, where the new college buildings were being reared, his dress was the same. Indeed it is difficult for us to conceive of him in any other guise.

His virile and striking figure stalking about the corn-field campus became as familiar as Cascadilla Place or college chimes, and as much a part of the visible University.

With a little more gentleness and kindness of expression, he would have been a perfect model to sit for a painting of the mythical "Uncle Sam."

About the time that Ezra Cornell was giving a half million dollars and a fine farm as a foundation stone of the University, the so-called national game of base-ball was invented. We had had base-ball before, but the national game was supposed to embrace great improvements. In the old game, the number of players was limited only by the size of the school, and the allowance of bases, or "byes" as they were called, was equally generous. The national game limited the players to nine, and the bases to four. The length of the old game was only limited by the amount of daylight afforded by the diurnal revolutions of the earth upon its axis, while in the new game only nine innings were allowed. In short the old game was a very informal matter of the playground. The new game was to be conducted with all the exactness of a scientific experiment.

The national game became popular from the first. Every school and college and village had its ball-nine. Rules of the game were printed; expensive balls, turned bats, patent bases, uniform tunics, belts and caps for players were devised, all costing money.

Of course, the enterprising students of Cornell must have a base-ball club, and have it they did from the beginning.

Now, in those days it was believed that when a University wanted to extract money from other people's pockets, whether to equip a base-ball club, or to endow a chair of moral philosophy, the proper implement was a subscription paper; and, so we prepared a subscription paper, and sent out a committee to collect funds for a University base-ball foundation. The committee, of course, presented it to our honored Founder, and speedily returned with the report that he had read our paper and given this reply: "When I was a boy and wanted to play ball, my mother took an old stocking and unraveled it, and wound the yarn into a ball; and I found an old boot-top and cut out the leather, and covered my ball. That was a good enough ball for me; I think it ought to be good enough for you."

One can see the twinkle in the old man's eye, as with grim Quaker humor he made this answer. But the humor was not apparent to us at that time.

We recognized the picture he drew. Most of us had come from farm homes, where, by the sitting-room fireside, we had often taken part in just such homely scenes as the one he described. We were only one generation removed from the straitened boyhood of Ezra Cornell; our fathers were his contemporaries; but all that was to us a past which we had left far behind, and of which we did not wish to be reminded. Were we not now matriculated students of a great University?

Moreover, we were not "boys", but University men. Should we not have national balls and bats and belts that would rival, if not surpass, those of Harvard and Yale and Princeton?

However it may be now, in those days undergraduates had opinions of persons and things, confident, decided, and outspoken; opinions that couldn't possibly be wrong, and were, therefore, very serviceable for their purposes. We decided that a Founder who would give a half million dollars for teaching languages, mechanic arts and mathematics, and refuse twenty-five dollars for founding a base-ball club, was wanting in the sense of proportion; his judgment was bad on the relative importance of things; and we tacitly voted that Mr. Cornell was not qualified to be a member of the Cornell University he had founded. We did not object to him as a Founder, but for a matriculated member of the University, really he wouldn't quite do.

Looking back to that base-ball incident with the light of nearly forty years upon it, it appears to me vastly different than it then appeared. Mr. Cornell was not selfish or mean; he was generous and kind. He was rich—a few dollars meant little to him. No doubt it would have been easier to give than to withhold his subscription. But he had a serious view of things. The importance of economy in the Cornell boys, the dread of allowing them to acquire

extravagant and wasteful notions in their new surroundings, the relative unimportance of mere play contrasted with the paramount significance of the work of education,—these things stood uppermost in his mind.

Athletic sports, whatever they may be now, were no part of a college course then. They were not even among the much abused "elective studies." Much less had they any place in schooling, when Ezra Cornell was a boy.

Most of the early Cornell students got their "setting up" with a pitchfork in the hay-field, or an axe in the wood-lot, and the only uniform they had worn consisted of the uniform six-penny straw hats, bought by the dozen at the beginning of summer, and fitted to all heads on the farm by the simple process of drawing the uniform black braid band a little tighter or a little looser.

Mr. Cornell was one of that generation of strong men, who, in the first half of the nineteenth century, created the rural part of the State of New York, and a goodly part of Ohio and Pennsylvania. The ground where we now stand was, at the beginning of that period, about the middle of what was called the west, and their fathers and mothers had come hither as pioneers from New England to settle this wilderness. Ezra Cornell and ten thousand other boys like him were born just in time to help their fathers finish up the clearing of the land, and to continue their labors by pulling stumps, laying stone walls, planting orchards, building water wheels, substituting solid houses for outgrown log-cabins, and creating good homesteads and farms. This work was largely done in the fifty years preceding the Civil War. It was a work of vast labor, for it was the task of changing the wild and deserted forest into a fruitful and prosperous countryside.

The men who did it were hardy men; sons of the Puritans and Quakers of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island; men of a serious cast of mind; of much simplicity of life; in narrow conditions and living with great economy; they were not rich, and yet they were not poor; no one

would think of speaking of them as in poverty and they, first of all, would resent it. The pauper is a man poor, not only in purse, but in ambition, in action and in enterprise. These men were independent, self-reliant, industrious and strong.

A keen sense of moral accountability was a dominating principle in their lives; an active public spirit manifested itself in the struggle for better roads, the construction of railroads and telegraphs for public convenience, the building of good court houses and stately churches. Not a few of them became men of large affairs. But most characteristic of all the marks of the old New York farmer was his intense appreciation of the value of education, and the determination that his sons should have it. Himself denied its privileges, and struggling under the limitations of a brief and inferior common school learning, he would spend his fortune to exhaustion that his sons should be educated, and that thoroughly.

Practical in everything else, saving, painstaking and matter of fact, if he had a dream it was the vision of his boys as honored scholars in the college which he had never even seen.

Do not make the mistake of supposing, however, that our farmer was ignorant. He had not great book-learning. He might not be a good speller. When his stiff hand wrote a letter, he might spell no better than William Shakespeare or a twentieth century simplified spelling board, but his ideas were clear, and tersely expressed. He was well informed. He read his newspaper and his agricultural paper and his religious paper faithfully. His mind was alert. The county court, the town meeting, the general training, the church, the debates of the supervisors, political conventions, all were educational influences. He became intelligent; and his intelligence and his learning grew with every passing year. His judgment was good; his practical sense was discriminating. He learned rapidly by actual association with others.

Nor was he without ideals. Witness the Founder's simple, yet comprehensive, aspiration for this University: "I would found an institution where any person may find instruction in any study." If one may be pardoned a personal allusion, I may repeat the ideal expressed by another plain, strong man of that time to his sons going out to college:

"No young man is liberally educated, unless he has been taught, when called upon to speak in public, to express himself properly, and without embarrassment."

This intense yearning for education and culture was transmitted by those men to the next generation to a marked degree. It chanced that the first classes to enter Cornell University, entered three years after the close of the Civil War. In those classes as well as in the next class, were soldier boys who, after leaving school to serve their country in the ranks for three or four years, had returned to their books. So that we youngsters, while preparing for college, had these scarred veterans beside us on the same bench, poring over the commentaries of Caesar and the problems of Euclid. They were four or five years our seniors in age, and oh! how vastly our seniors in experience!

I well remember having for classmates in school, two of these soldier boys who stumped about, each with a crippled leg, shortened by a deadly minie ball, and one of them bore six separate wounds received on as many battle-fields. And, upon the same stage coach that brought me as a freshman on my journey toward Ithaca, rode two classmates, one a veteran soldier, the other a sailor. These soldier boys were, most of them, working their way through an education. Too poor to buy much new clothing, they had their military coats dyed black, and the brass buttons exchanged for plain ones, and modestly, almost with timidity, took their seats upon the school benches beside us striplings.

Drawn from the very school-house by the battle call of their country, and, at her demand, delayed in learning the

lessons of youth, when the battle was over, they returned, hardened, maimed veteran soldiers in the flesh, but with the teachable, tractable spirit of a good school-boy, and resumed with patience the studies they had left, gratefully accepting, with simplicity and good nature, the help of the school-fellow lads who sat beside them.

Noble and marvellous deportment! Where has its like ever been seen, except among the sons of those stern and strong men of the days of Ezra Cornell, whose very heart's desire was for more learning.

I remember a classmate in the University, one of the eldest men in the class, who found it difficult with constant study to keep pace with his fellows.

When orders came that all students should report for outdoor military drill, thrice a week, he felt that he could not afford the time; and, after drilling a few afternoons, modestly applied to Major Whittlesey, Commandant of Cadets, to be excused from drill. That old martinet, veteran of the Mexican War, sternly asked why, when my classmate replied that he had been training and marching with a gun in the 89th New York Regiment for four years, a good deal of the time at night as well as day, and he thought he really did not need the drill. On reflection Major Whittlesey thought so, too.

Young gentlemen of the undergraduate classes, and you, young ladies, you are but one generation behind these soldier students of Cornell, who were so brave and modest. Some of you may be the children of those noblemen. Is their chastened and brave spirit in you?

You are but two generations from the austere and faithful men of Ezra Cornell's day. They were your grandfathers. Have you inherited their noble self-denial, their high moral courage, and their intense love for learning?

I believe you have, for the very blood must carry it.

Be proud of those who have gone before. Rejoice in your inheritance from Cornell. Add to her nobility and her glory by faithfulness and nobleness, that those who

come long after us and sing the beloved name of our Alma Mater, as we sing it to-day, may rejoice in an unbroken line of gentle and noble lives.

[The later Alumni were represented by the Hon. Sherman Moreland, majority leader in the Assembly of the State of New York, and a member of the class of 1892. Mr. Moreland spoke without manuscript and, unfortunately, no report was secured of the address.]

PRESIDENT SCHURMAN: The committee in charge desired that the present undergraduates in the University should also be represented at the celebration, and they have naturally selected the President of the Senior Class, Mr. W. W. Taylor, who has reflected honor on the University as a winner of oratorical contests, not only on this platform, but in competition with other institutions. Mere youth always touches our hearts, and I am sure that, not only the undergraduates, but every one in this audience, will give Mr. Taylor a cordial welcome.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LIFE OF EZRA CORNELL TO THE UNDERGRADUATE

W. W. TAYLOR, '07

On such an occasion as this, it is a privilege and an honor not to be lightly prized to welcome on behalf of the undergraduate body our guests and friends who, themselves men of achievement, have come among us to honor one whose greatest achievement is this our *alma mater*. Mr. Corbin we are glad to have with us as an old alumnus and a friend of the Founder. Mr. Moreland we welcome, not as a brilliant figure in the government of our state, but as one of us—a Cornellian. To our honored and able President the undergraduate body on this happy occasion extends the heartiest of good feeling, and may I add, congratulations upon the magnificent service he has rendered us. Truly he is achieving his ambition expressed in his own words, "ever to be president of an ever advancing Cornell." And never to be forgotten is our beloved former president Andrew D. White—Cornell's greatest friend and co-founder, to whose creative genius we owe so much. From the bottom of the heart we hope that for

many years to come he may dwell among us,—our friend, guide and philosopher—the sage of Ithaca.

But, if it is a pleasure and an honor to welcome our guests and friends upon this occasion, it is also a right and duty to pay our tribute and render our homage to the memory of a great and good man, for this of course is primarily our purpose.

What does Ezra Cornell mean to us—the undergraduate body? What is the signification of his life in relation to the student life of to-day? The answer to this is not easy. As Professor Hull has pointed out, "the most reverend senior was not yet born when the Founder was laid to rest"; between us and Ezra Cornell there are no personal links. Nor is the answer to be found in books or records. And yet, indefinite and intangible though it may be, the significance that Ezra Cornell has for us is none the less real and personal. For, if we stop and examine this undergraduate life of ours, we make this discovery:—that, though consciously perhaps our Founder means too little to us, unconsciously his influence has worked mightily upon us, that, though apparently we know him not, in reality we are in close communion, that, though we do not perhaps realize him well enough with our minds and in the fact, we feel him in our hearts and in the spirit. And to this discovery our whole complex Cornell life is one great attestation. Into it the Founder has breathed his spirit. It is manifest in our University work and in our undergraduate activities. The Sibley man with his forging hammer, the civil engineer with his transit, the agriculturist with his threshing machine, the architect with his rule, and the medical and veterinary students with their scalpels, all dealing with physical things and producing tangible results, have created about the Cornell Campus an atmosphere of practical achievement. There is a work-a-day business air to it. As our honored president has said, "vigor" is the keynote of our life, and vigor and the attainment of practical ends are dominating facts in the life of Ezra Cornell. Thus in our

everyday work are we identified with the Founder. But, further, this same Cornell spirit finds its way into our undergraduate activities and more intimate life. If eagerness for results, indomitable purpose, and persistency of action were characteristics of Ezra Cornell, are not the same characteristics to-day the secret of the success of our crew and our track team, our glee club and our journalism? Yes, here again we are at one with our Founder. What was almost a religion with Ezra Cornell has been made a part of our very life:—the inspiration of labor and practical achievement.

I speak thus far of material things. But it is not only here that Ezra Cornell is revealed to us. There are the things of the spirit. In the words of the Founder, he would found an institution where any person, irrespective of class, or means, or station in life, might come and find welcome. And to-day this is an ideal we are cherishing. A man here stands not for what he has but for what he is. There is an absence of sham or pretense, and in our Cornell life we are working out a sturdy democracy. Well may we be proud of it, for it is the legacy of a man who, born to poverty, raised himself in true American fashion to a position of power and affluence and then used it with a broad sympathy and understanding for his fellow-man. And along with our democracy, the clean endeavor of the Founder's life has come down to us;—in our reputation for sportsmanlike athletics, in our college competitions, and in our strivings for straightforward political methods do we see it manifested.

And over and above all these things what splendid opportunity for continual growth has Ezra Cornell made possible. Founded upon original ideas, with no sham necessity of following so-called precedent, our life is plastic and responsive. Ours is an atmosphere of forward impulse, of evolutionary trend. Bound by no tradition, scorning any semblance of imitation, our destiny is to lead, not in one thing or in many, but in all. Back to the intense Americanism